

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9855

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

USLO PEKING

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

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E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, JA

SUBJECT: JAPANESE DOMESTIC REACTION TO FALL OF SAIGON

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

SUMMARY: JAPANESE PRESS HAS PORTRAYED SVN COLLAPSE AS PRODUCT OF STRUGGLE FOR SELF-DETERMINATION AND FAILURE OF U.S. POLICY. SOME PAPERS, ECHOED BY OPPOSITION PARTIES, CALL FOR "MORE INDEPENDENT" JAPANESE FOREIGN POLICY AND RESOLUTION OF ASIAN PROBLEMS BY ASIANS. MANY LDP MEMBERS, ESPECIALLY CONCERNED OVER POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENTS IN KOREA, ARE CALLING FOR CLOSER TIES WITH U.S. IN ANY EVENT, DEBATE OVER MEANING OF FALL OF SAIGON AND FUTURE COURSE OF JAPANESE FOREIGN POLICY HAS JUST BEGUN. END SUMMARY

1. OVERALL JAPANEXE PRESS AND TELEVISION HAVE TENDED TO PORTRAY COLLAPSE OF SVN AS INEVITABLE CULMINATION OF NATIONALISTIC STRUGGLE BY VIETNAMESE PEOPLE FOR "SELF DETERMINATION", NOT AS RESULT OF AGGRESSION BY HANOI. MEDIA COMMENTATORS ARGUE THAT
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U.S. FAILED TO UNDERSTAND ASPIRATIONS OF INDOCHINA PEOPLE AND

ERRED IN ITS PERCEPTION OF STRUGGLE AS ONE CAST IN IDEOLOGICAL TERMS. FALL OF SAIGON NOT ONLY EXEMPLIFIES FAILURE OF U.S. POLICY IN INDOCHINA BUT, IN VIEW OF SOME COMMENTATORS, MARKS "END OF WESTERN DOMINATION OF ASIA" JAPANESE GOVERNMENT, WHICH FOR TOO LONG MISTAKENLY SUPPORTED US "INTERVENTION", SHOULD MOVE TO ADJUST TO NEW REALITIES AND DEVELOP POLICY LINE WHICH IS CONSONANT WITH NOTION THAT ASIAN PROBLEMS SHOULD BE SOLVED BY ASIANS. THIS, THEY SAY, MEANS THAT JAPAN SHOULD ADOPT MORE INDEPENDENT FOREIGN POLICY STANCE. SPECIFICALLY, THEY URGE GOJ TO TAKE STEPS TO GUARANTEE SAFETY OF THOSE JAPANESE WHO WERE UNABLE TO LEAVE SAIGON AND TO QUICKLY ESTABLISH RELATIONS WITH NEW PRG REGIME.

2. ONE OF MOST IMMEDIATE AND MAJOR CONCERNS FOR JAPANESE IS POSSIBLE RAMIFICATIONS OF INDOCHINA DEVELOPMENTS FOR KOREA AND SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS WITH U.S. ALTHOUGH THERE HAS BEEN NO OFFICIAL LDP REACTION, OUTLINES OF POSSIBLE DEBATE IN LDP ARE ALREADY BEGINNING TO APPEAR, WITH OPINION SPLIT ALONG FAMILIAR HAWK AND DOVE LINES. HAWK VIEW, AS REPRESENTED BY LDP FOREIGN AFFAIRS RESEARCH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN KITAZAWA, IS THAT RECENT EVENTS DEMONSTRATE COMMUNISTS HAVE NOT ABANDONED POLICY OF MILITARY EXPANSION AND ARE LIKELY TO BECOME MORE AGGRESSIVE IN KOREA. THEREFORE, JAPAN MUST STRENGTHEN SECURITY RELATIONSHIP WITH U.S. AND ABILITY TO DEFEND ITSELF.

3. LDP DOVES SEE PRESENT SITUATION AS BEGINNING OF MOVEMENT FOR "NEW ASIA" TO WHICH JAPAN SHOULD RESPOND WITH SYMPATHY AND UNDERSTANDING. WHILE SECURITY TIES WITH U.S. SHOULD BE MAINTAINED JAPAN SHOULD COOPERATE WITH NATIONS HAVING DIFFERING IDEOLOGIES, IN PARTICULAR, ITS ASIAN DIPLOMACY SHOULD, THROUGH INVESTMENT AND TECHNOLOGICAL COOPERATION, SEEK TO ENCOURAGE INDOCHINESE NATIONALISM IN DIRECTION OF DEMOCRACY.

4. OPPOSITION PARTY STATEMENTS HAVE BEEN PREDICTABLE ONES. JSP AND JCP WELCOME "PEOPLE'S VICTORY", DECLARE FAILURE OF U.S. POLICY, URGE RECOGNITION OF PRG, AND DEMAND END OF JAPANESE SUBSERVIENCE TO U.S. KOKI TO CALLS FOR SETTLEMENT BASED ON SELF-DETERMINATION AND ALSO DEMANDS END OF GOJ POLICY "SUBSERVIENCE" TO U.S. DSP HOPES FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF DEMOCRACY BASED ON HARMONY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IN INDOCHINA AND ADVOCATES JAPANESE RECONSTRUCTION AID. DSP, HOWEVER, ALSO DISPLAYS CONCERN OVER KOREA AND ASSERTS NEED FOR MAINTENANCE OF SECURITY TIES WITH U.S.

5. COMMENT: THE JAPANESE, NOW IN MIDST OF WEEK-LONG "GOLDEN WEEK" HOLIDAYS, WERE CAUGHT BY SURPRISE BY EPOCHAL EVENTS IN SAIGON. RIGHT NOW THEY FIND THEMSELVES IN NEW SITUATION WITHOUT CLEAR NOTION OF WHAT IS HAPPENING IN SAIGON AND WHAT IT ALL

MEANS, THE JAPANESE SEE PROTECTION OF JAPANESE NATIONALS IN
SAIGON AND CONTACT OF SOME KIND WITH NEW SVN REGIME AS URGENT
TASKS FOR THE GOVERNMENT. BEYOND THIS, THERE IS AS YET NO CLEAR
CONSENSUS. HOWEVER, SERIOUS DEBATE HAS ALREADY
BEGUN ON THE MEANING OF INDOCHINA EVENTS AND PROPER
FUTURE VIABLE COURSE.

MAJOR FOCUS OF CONCERN

UNDOUBTEDLY WILL BE ON KOREA WHERE A GYK DEBATE
CERTAIN TO BE INTENSIFIED.(DEVELOPMENTS AND
ANALYSIS OF GOJ POST-VIETNAM OUTLOOK WILL BE
REPORTED BY SEPTELS.)

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